

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 HA-05 CU-04 /073 W
-----097307 311039Z /10

R 300500Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9512
INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, ID, SN
SUBJECT: SINGAPORE PRESS REQUEST TO CLEAR REPORTS ON INDONESIA
WITH INDONESIAN EMBASSY

REFS: (A) JAKARTA 1007, (B) JAKARTA 1055

1. THE SINGAPORE AFTERNOON TABLOID NEW NATION REPORTED ON JANUARY 26 THAT THE LOCAL INDONESIAN EMBASSY HAS ASKED SINGAPORE NEWSPAPERS TO CHECK WITH IT TO ASCERTAIN THE ACCURACY OF FOREIGN NEWS SERVICE REPORTS ON THE INDONESIAN SITUATION BEFORE PRINTING THEM. EMBASSY INFORMATION OFFICER ABDUL IRSAN WAS ALSO QUOTED AS REQUESTING THE PRESS NOT TO DRAMATIZE REPORTS FROM INDONESIA, SAYING THAT THIS WOULD HELP MAINTAIN POLITICAL STABILITY IN INDONESIA AS WELL AS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AS A WHOLE. IRSAN ADDED THAT "OUR EMBASSY HAS A DIRECT CHANNEL TO OUR GOVERNMENT AT HOME AND THIS CAN HELP NEWSPAPERS TO CLARIFY THE SITUATION IN INDONESIA."

2. THE IMPACT OF IRSAN'S OFFER WAS SOMEWHAT VITIATED, HOWEVER,
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WHEN HE REFUSED TO COMMENT ON A PRESS SERVICE STORY THAT THE DEFENSE MINISTRY IN JAKARTA HAD DECLINED TO COMMENT ON REPORTS THAT IT HAD DECIDED TO REMOVE GENERAL DHARSONO FROM HIS POSITION AS ASEAN SECRETARY-GENERAL.

3. IRSAN'S REMARKABLE REQUEST (AND PRESUMABLY LIM BIAN KIE'S IRE, AS REPORTED REF B) APPARENTLY AROSE FROM TWO REUTER

ARTICLES, DATED IN JAKARTA, WHICH WERE CARRIED BY THE STRAITS TIMES. THE FIRST, ON JANUARY 18, REPORTED A STATEMENT BY ADAM MALIK CALLING ON INDONESIAN ARMY GENERALS TO STOP TALKING POLITICS. WHEN MALIK LATER DENIED HAVING MADE THE STATEMENT, THE INDONESIAN PRESS APPARENTLY DENOUNCED REUTERS AND THE STRAITS TIMES FOR CARRYING THE REPORT. THE SECOND ARTICLE, ON JANUARY 24, REPORTED THAT DHARSONO HAD BEEN DISMISSED AS ASEAN SECRETARY-GENERAL (REFTEL A). THIS REPORT WAS PROMPTLY DENIED BY THE INDONESIAN EMBASSY.

4. COMMENT: THE INDONESIAN EMBASSY REQUEST THAT SINGAPORE NEWSPAPERS VERIFY REPORTS FROM PRESS SERVICES SUCH AS REUTERS THROUGH THE EMBASSY BEFORE PRINTING THEM SEEMS TO BE CARRYING "THE SPIRIT OF ASEAN UNITY". PRETTY FAR. WITH REGARD TO MALIK'S DENIED STATEMENT, THOSE SINGAPOREANS AND OTHERS WHO HAVE FOLLOWED HIS LIVELY CAREER OVER THE YEARS CAN RECALL ANY NUMBER OF OFF-THE-CUFF REMARKS WHICH HAVE REQUIRED SUBSEQUENT DENIALS. REUTERS, AT LEAST, APPARENTLY DOES NOT INTEND TO HEED INDONESIAN PRESSURE TO TONE DOWN ITS REPORTING. THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF THE JANUARY 26 NEW NATION ARTICLE REPORTED THAT "A SPOKESMAN FOR REUTERS TODAY SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE ITS JAKARTA BUREAU HAS MISREPORTED THE SITUATION IN INDONESIA."

5. AN AUSTRALIAN NEWSMAN TOLD EMBASSY JANUARY 27 THAT THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT'S EXTREME DISPLEASURE WITH REUTERS AND THE STRAITS TIMES SEEMED TO STEM IN PART FROM "NORMAL IN-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INDONESIAN HYSTERIA" AND IN PART FROM RIVALRY BETWEEN REUTERS AND AFP IN JAKARTA. WHENEVER REUTERS RAN A STORY THAT MIGHT DISPLEASE THE INDONESIAN LEADERSHIP, HE SAID, AFP WOULD FIND WAYS OF DRAWING IT FORCIBLY TO THE GOI'S ATTENTION.
HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, INSTRUCTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SINGAP00451
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780045-1013
Format: TEL
From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978017/aaaaaftt.tel
Line Count: 99
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 JAKARTA 1007, 78 JAKARTA 1055
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3784598
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SINGAPORE PRESS REQUEST TO CLEAR REPORTS ON INDONESIA WITH INDONESIAN EMBASSY
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, SOPN, ID, SN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/963efce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014